

DOUGLAS (W.C.)

UNIVERSITY EXTENSION AND THE
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN
ASSOCIATION.

BY

WALTER C. DOUGLAS,

General Secretary of the Philadelphia Young Men's Christian Association.

*[Reprinted from the Proceedings of the First Annual Meeting
of the National Conference on University Extension.]*



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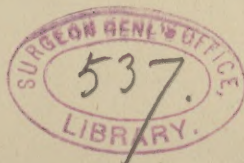
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UNIVERSITY EXTENSION AND THE YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION.

THE object of the Young Men's Christian Association is defined to be the physical, intellectual, social, and spiritual improvement of young men. In other words, its high ideal is the development of the entire man. To develop the young men intellectually, it uses libraries, reading-rooms, literary societies, lectures, and evening classes.

Any young man of good character, of any race, religion, or condition in life, may join it, and hence it has all classes of young men in its membership, but, with the exception of quite a large student element, its ranks are filled mainly with clerks and mechanics. In some sections of this city the latter predominate, in others the former. They mingle in all its buildings in varying proportions. They are, of course, all working during the day for a living. The Association seeks to provide for their wants in their leisure hours. The Association aims not only to develop the young men along all the main lines of their lives, but also to ward off things that would degrade and injure them. A young man at work is all right. It is the manner in which he spends his leisure time that gives moral coloring to his life and decides his future value to home, to his employer, and to the state. His avocation is as important as his vocation, and every young man should have some good occupation for leisure as well as business hours. Robert J. Burdette half humorously but altogether wisely puts it in this way: "My son, you complain of hard work killing you, of long business hours. But it is not the hard work that is hurting you, it is not the long hours from 8 A.M. to 5 P.M., but it is the interval, my boy, that is killing you. It is the interval between 6 P.M. and midnight."



The Association steps in at this point, takes hold of young men in the critical period from sixteen to twenty-five years, and seeks to lead them to use means that will help and strengthen them physically, mentally, and spiritually. It is not enough to say to young men, "Thou shalt not," but we must fill their lives with better things. In other words, it is an adaptation in practical things of Dr. Chalmers's famous use of "the expulsive power of new affections."

The educational work of the Association has grown greatly within the past thirty years. In my judgment, to-day it is the greatest of all our agencies in drawing young men into our membership. To me this is profoundly gratifying, and refutes the charge sometimes made that the young men of to-day are frivolous. The Associations are offering great social attractions and many healthful recreations for the tired brains and bodies of young men; but, after all, that which requires most work, hard study, and application is the thing which draws the largest proportion of young men from mill, shop, and office to our buildings in the evenings. The practical talks and historical or scientific lectures of the Philadelphia Association have for years been attended by an average of eleven hundred young men, while in our educational classes last winter there were enrolled twelve hundred and eighty-eight young men. In point of mere numbers it compared favorably with the undergraduate departments of many of our large universities.

But these studies relate almost entirely to business life. They aim to prepare clerks and mechanics for better and more useful lives in their respective occupations. This is good, but there is something more important,—viz., to prepare young men for higher and better citizenship. In the words of the English leaders of University Extension, "to make good workmen is important, to make good citizens is more important." For years there had been a growing sense of need in our more advanced Associations in this respect. With their hundreds of thousands of members all young men, they may become, and indeed are, great training-schools of American citizens of a higher type. Our experience has shown us that in our American cities

there are thousands of young men of as bright minds and eager, ambitious spirits as ever matriculated in the colleges of our land. But they have had no advantages. They are poor, or their parents died when they were young, and they have had to go to work early. They are at a disadvantage in life through lack of mental equipment. They are not only fighting its battles with one hand tied, but they are also shut out from worlds of enjoyment known only to the student.

The majority of these young men, it is true, have come to us seeking only for "bread and meat" education,—*i.e.*, for that knowledge which will help them to advancement in their daily business. But there has been a minority who have come asking how they might prepare themselves for college or get higher literary culture. We have been unable as yet to do much for this class.

It was just at this moment that University Extension came before us with its magnificent promise. And its coming has been hailed with joy by these eager, earnest young men, who were brain-hungry and had been crying out for supply in this direction.

The reasons why the Young Men's Christian Association should co-operate in University Extension may be summed up under two heads. The first is because it has the facilities for doing the work. Three things are considered important in the establishment of a local centre for the Extension of University teaching,—*viz.*, an existing organization of some kind to afford a nucleus of attendance, a suitable hall or rooms for lectures and classes, and reference libraries or conveniences for handling books. The Association possesses these requisites. In the second place, University Extension being clearly a movement of the highest public good, and placing educational privileges heretofore denied them within reach of multitudes of young men, the Association should gladly co-operate with it on these accounts. It should do so to that extent that will not interfere with its other work or diminish what it offers to young men. This I take to be the only limitations upon it. The Association aims to give to the world as the final product of its work a young man intel-

lectual as well as spiritual, and there seems no reason why its co-operation with University Extension should not prove a union of forces that will greatly advance its efforts to realize this high ideal of an all-around man.

The extent and method of co-operation we think may be readily and satisfactorily defined. Our experience in Philadelphia has been entirely free from difficulty or embarrassment. The extent and method of co-operation in Philadelphia have been as follows: representative Association men are serving upon the committees of the various local centres. A centre has been formed at the Central Branch of the Young Men's Christian Association, at Fifteenth and Chestnut Streets, which is known as Association Local Centre. The Association puts at the service of this centre office facilities, attention from office help, library, and free use of committee- and class-rooms, so far as its own work will permit. The trustees who hold Association Hall for purposes of revenue have granted the free use of it for the opening lecture of each course, and have made a special rate for such lecture-courses as required this large hall. The Committee of Management of Association Local Centre has no organic connection whatever with the Young Men's Christian Association in the same building. There are upon it two or three representative Association men interested in our educational work, but the committee is made up of other interests, and is representative in the widest sense of all other elements of the community. As a matter of fact, religiously it represents Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, and Judaism, while in other respects it is equally omni-representative.

As will thus be seen, there is no organic connection between the two bodies, as there is none between any other of the fourteen or more University Extension centres of this city and neighborhood and the various universities, societies, and institutes in or with which they are held. It is a matter of co-operation without any such relation as would interfere with the full development and free action of each institution.

The managers of Association Local Centre have voluntarily put all University Extension tickets at half-rates to young men

who have already paid their membership-fees in the Young Men's Christian Association. They are also generous in making provision for young men whose resources may be too slender for a double tax even as slight as this.

Two questions will present themselves to managers of Young Men's Christian Associations. The first is as to whether young men have availed themselves of these courses to any extent. Clearly if, by co-operating with other institutions that have educational features, we can bring to deserving young men the priceless advantages of university culture we ought to do so.

The objection has sometimes been made to University Extension abroad and here that it reaches and benefits women much more largely than men. There is no apology for it on this account in England, and there will be none here. If this movement touches, quickens, and broadens the intellectual life of the mothers, wives, and daughters of our nation, if it irradiates our homes with high intellectual joys, if it pervades the womanhood of America with its magnificent culture, then so much the better for University Extension and for our country.

Yet as managers intrusted with a definite work for young men, we must consider the question of the effect of this upon our efforts in behalf of young men, and whether it reaches them as a class to any valuable extent. To this we answer that it is reaching young men, though not to the same extent as others, and more in the evening than afternoon lectures. This has been true both last winter and this. History, literature, economics, and science have all had a number of young men present. A class in higher mathematics for two winters has had an average attendance of nearly one hundred, the most of whom were skilled mechanics. In the evening classes upon socialism now being conducted in this holiday season by Mr. Sadler (of Oxford University), I have seen many intelligent, earnest students that at other times I have seen in the class-rooms of this Association.

The general effect of the introduction of University Extension into our work may be briefly summed up. It has quickened intellectual aspiration among the young men in our membership. It has opened unexplored mines of literary wealth and revealed

a new world of beauty and truth. It has stretched before young men a continuation of study and mental growth beyond the more limited and so-called more practical studies of our own class-rooms. It has put within the reach of thousands of them that greatly-coveted but heretofore denied boon and blessing, liberal culture and university instruction of the very highest order. Attendance upon such lectures, by such teachers, for a few seasons, will give any young man a truly broad and liberal culture; and who can estimate the ever-increasing power of such young men for future years in their own social and business circles? By co-operation with this movement, University Extension may be made the fitting crown and completed perfection of that educational effort into which the Young Men's Christian Association puts so much genuine sympathy and vigorous work, because it believes, as it avows, in the intellectual, the physical, the social, and the spiritual development of the young man,—that is, in the development of the whole man. This is its ideal, and in University Extension, while it can properly aid a great progressive and uplifting movement for the good of the general public, it can incidentally but effectually advance its efforts in behalf of that special class for whom it exists and labors,—the young men of our country and the world.

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THE AMERICAN SOCIETY.

THE American Society for the Extension of University Teaching was founded in response to a deeply-felt want for a National Association which might assist in promoting the work of University Extension. The friends of popular education feel that the time has come for a better utilization of the facilities for instruction which are to be found in our existing educational institutions. Experience has shown that this object is accomplished with great measure of success by the movement popularly known as University Extension. The results of this system in several countries—notably in England and the United States—have attracted much attention, and its merits are now widely known.

The American Society is doing a twofold work. It is, in the first place, collecting information as to the progress of the movement in all countries, and, through its monthly journal, making it accessible to those interested in this system of instruction. In the second place, it is carrying on an extensive experiment in University Extension instruction. This work is a persistent effort to solve the difficult problems involved in the training of lecturers, the conduct and sequence of courses, and the financial support of centres. In this way the work of the Society becomes a series of illustrative experiments in adapting University Extension teaching to American conditions. It is plain that if the Society can successfully solve these difficult problems it will render a great service to American education, making the introduction of the work throughout the country a matter of comparative ease. Every one interested in the ultimate success of this great movement for popular education should, therefore, to the extent of his ability, contribute to the support of the American Society.

To do this work efficiently will require large funds. The only sources of income at present are the fees of members (\$5.00 annual fee, \$50.00 life-membership fee) and the voluntary contributions of friends of the movement. You are cordially invited to become a member of the Society, and to present its claims to your friends and acquaintances who are, or should be, interested in the work.

The membership fee and all other contributions may be sent by postal order or draft on Philadelphia, or by draft on New York, payable to the order of Frederick B. Miles, Treasurer of the American Society for the Extension of University Teaching, Fifteenth and Chestnut Streets, Philadelphia.

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INSTRUCTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS
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If you wish to organize a Centre of University Extension work in your own locality, you will find the following suggestions helpful :

You should in the first place become thoroughly informed on the history and progress of the movement. You should make yourself familiar with the development of Extension Teaching from its origin in England down to the remarkably successful development thus far accomplished in America. You can easily obtain this information from the published literature of the American Society. The numbers of *University Extension*, a monthly journal published in the interest of the Society, contain many articles which will give you full information in regard to the history, organization, scope and method of University Extension Teaching. Among others we would mention the following articles : "The History of a Branch Society," and "The Formation of a Local Centre," July, 1891 ; "The Prospect of University Extension in England," August, 1891 ; "The Unit Course," September, 1891 ; "Students' Associations," October, 1891 ; "University Extension Colleges," December, 1891 ; "The Ideal Syllabus," January, 1892 ; "Class Work in University Extension," April, 1892.

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Preliminary Steps.—You must seek to arouse an interest in the subject in your community. As far as possible you should induce people to read as extensively as yourself. See that they provide themselves with the same literature, and read it over and discuss it with them. You will find without difficulty at least a few persons who will willingly go over this ground if you present the matter to them.

This, however, will not be sufficient. You must reach a larger circle. To assist you in this work the Society has prepared a series of circulars which you should obtain in large

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The American Society is doing a two-fold work. It is, in the first place, collecting information as to the progress of the movement in all countries and through its monthly journal making it accessible to those interested in this system of instruction. In the second place, it is carrying on an extensive experiment in University Extension instruction. This work is a persistent effort to solve the difficult problems involved in the training of lecturers, the conduct and sequence of courses, and the financial support of centres. In this way the work of the Society becomes a series of illustrative experiments in adapting University Extension teaching to American conditions. It is plain that if the Society can successfully solve these difficult problems it will render a great service to American education, making the introduction of the work throughout the country a matter of comparative ease. Everyone interested in the ultimate success of this great movement for popular education should, therefore, to the extent of his ability, contribute to the support of the American Society.

quantities and distribute widely among clergymen, school teachers, lawyers, physicians, editors and business men, and especially among the intelligent women of the community, for you will find the women deeply interested in this as in all good works.

Upon receipt of ten dollars, a large package of circulars, pamphlets and sample syllabi of lectures, or a smaller package upon receipt of five dollars, will be forwarded to be used in this manner. The distribution of this literature is essential to success, and when your organization is accomplished the Local Centre will usually assume, if desired, the amount which has been advanced for this purpose.

The distribution of these circulars should be preceded and followed by personal interviews on the part of those whom you have succeeded in interesting in the movement with the ones to whom the circulars are sent. A word in advance of the circulars secures attention to them; a word after them clinches the matter.

Newspapers.—You should make a special point of interesting the newspapers in the movement. A well-disposed editor can often help you more than any other person in the community. Newspaper men, however, are busy. They have not always time to write up the matter themselves and they frequently cannot give it sufficient attention to present it properly to the community. Take hold of it yourself. Write articles setting the subject forth in the proper light and you will find the editors very glad to get them. See, moreover, that every item of public interest connected with the movement is properly prepared for the paper, so that false notions as to the character of the work may not get abroad. It is very difficult to correct wrong ideas when they have once gained currency.

Public Meeting.—After this preliminary work has been done, the next step is to organize a great public meeting at which the whole subject can be discussed and explained. You will often find that the preliminary work can be done very quickly and that the public meeting can be held sooner than might be anticipated. The presence of persons who are fully acquainted with the movement and are capable of presenting it in an attractive manner should be secured. This meeting is a critical point, and no pains should be spared to make it a success. Money spent in this direction, whether in advertising the meeting or in securing the presence of a competent organ-

izer, is sure to meet a large return. At this meeting a committee should be appointed with power to enlarge its numbers, to appoint a smaller executive committee, and to perfect arrangements as circumstances may permit.

Committee.—After you get the committee organized be sure that they are thoroughly educated as to the work. Get the literature before described into their hands. Above all, see that they get *University Extension* and read it regularly. In no other way can you so securely hold the attention and interest of the committee as by getting them to read regularly the organ of the Society.

It is an entirely legitimate expense to subscribe to *University Extension* for each member of the committee, and this item should be charged to the Local Centre.

A pamphlet, entitled "Instructions and Suggestions to Local Committees," price 25 cents, contains the further information which it is essential that members of this committee should have.

Each centre should purchase a sufficient number of copies of this pamphlet so that each member of the Committee may have one to read and study for himself.

Expenses.—The initiative in the organization of a Local Centre must be taken by persons in the community. The money which will be necessary to meet the initial expenses is usually advanced by those who are interested in the movement, and should be assumed by the Centre when the organization is effected. It will seldom be difficult to raise, either in the form of a subscription or of a guarantee fund, the necessary money for this purpose. Additional information on any point relating to the work may be obtained by addressing

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